CLAIMS

1.   A method for interactive distribution and presentation of information and for measuring information exposure, comprising:

organizing each of a plurality of message sets into a multi-level information tree structure, some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for sequential presentation and some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for alternative presentation, and storing each of said plurality of message sets on at least one computer that is connected to a computer network;

assigning selection criteria to each message set;

selecting, based on the selection criteria, one of the message sets for presentation to a user connected to the network and presenting a message of a first level in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with a plurality of response choices;

receiving a selected response from the user;

selectively and iteratively presenting messages of subsequent levels in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with subsequent response choices based on user response to previously presented response choices;

monitoring a level of said multi-level tree structure that said user reached during said step of selecting and iteratively presenting messages; and

generating statistics for each selected message set, said statistics indicating for each of a plurality of levels in the corresponding information tree the likelihood that users in a given demographic group are presented with a message in that level.

2.   The method according to claim 1, wherein the message set is selected by referring to said information tree or a group of information trees to which said information tree belongs and based on some information the user retrieves from a computer connected to the computer network.

3.   The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of selecting a message set for presentation to a user includes:

receiving from the user's computer a user ID that refers to a user profile in a user profile database,

comparing the user profile with selection criteria associated with the message sets, and

selecting a message set with criteria that are fulfilled by the user profile.

4.   The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of selecting a message set for presentation to a user includes:

assigning priorities to the message sets; and

selecting the message set with the highest priority of all the message sets that are eligible for selection.

5.   The method according to claim 1, wherein messages in the selected message set are embedded in information the user accesses from a computer on the computer network.

6.   The method according to 1, wherein messages are transferred to the user's computer in a form that will cause such messages to be presented separate from any other information presented to the user, such as in a separate window, in a pop-up window on the display of the user's computer, or as audio, or as a combination thereof.

7.   The method according to claim 1, wherein messages in the message sets are multimedia messages.

8.   The method according to claim 1, wherein any text portions of the messages are run through a text to speech converter and a speech synthesizer in order to be presented to the user as audible speech.

9.   The method according to claim 8, wherein the output of the text to speech converter or the speech synthesizer is forwarded to computer animation means on the user's computer in order to generate the animated image of a talking head.

10.   A method for interactive distribution and presentation of information and for generating revenue from such interactive distribution and presentation of information, said method comprising:

organizing each of a plurality of message sets into a multi-level information tree structure, some messages in said multi-level information tree

being arranged for sequential presentation and some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for alternative presentation, and storing each of said plurality of message sets on at least one computer that is connected to a computer network, the determination of which messages are included in which levels of said information tree being based on a fee arrangement that charges higher fees for messages in lower levels of said multi-level information tree relative to messages in higher levels of said multi-level information tree;

assigning selection criteria to each message set;

selecting, based on the selection criteria, one of the message sets for presentation to a user connected to the network and presenting a message of a first level in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with a plurality of response choices;

receiving a selected response from the user;

selectively and iteratively presenting messages of subsequent levels in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with subsequent response choices based on user response to previously presented response choices;

monitoring a level of said multi-level tree structure that said user reached during said step of selecting and iteratively presenting messages; and

generating statistics for each selected message set, said statistics indicating for each of a plurality of levels in the information tree

corresponding to the selected message set the likelihood that users in a given demographic group are presented with a message in that level.

11.   A method for interactive distribution and presentation of information and for generating revenue from such interactive distribution and presentation of information, comprising:

organizing each of a plurality of message sets into a multi-level information tree structure, some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for sequential presentation and some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for alternative presentation, and storing each of said plurality of message sets on at least one computer that is connected to a computer network;

assigning selection criteria to each message set;

selecting, based on the selection criteria, one of the message sets for presentation to a user connected to the network and presenting a message of a first level in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with a plurality of response choices, the likelihood of selection for a given message set being a function of a priority fee arrangement for presenting said given message set;

receiving a selected response from the user,

selectively and iteratively presenting messages of subsequent levels in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to

said user along with subsequent response choices based on user response to previously presented response choices;

monitoring a level of said multi-level tree structure that said user reached during said step of selecting and iteratively presenting messages; and

generating statistics for each selected message set, said statistics indicating for each of a plurality of levels in the information tree corresponding to the selected message set the likelihood that users in a given demographic group are presented with a message in that level.

12.   A method for targeting interactive distribution and presentation of information, comprising:

organizing each of a plurality of message sets into a multi-level information tree structure, some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for sequential presentation and some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for alternative presentation, and storing each of said plurality of message sets on at least one computer that is connected to a computer network;

assigning selection criteria to each message set;

selecting, based on the selection criteria, one of the message sets for presentation to a user connected to the network and presenting a message of a first level in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with a plurality of response choices,

receiving a selected response from the user,

selectively and iteratively presenting messages of subsequent levels in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with subsequent response choices based on user response to previously presented response choices;

monitoring a level of said multi-level tree structure that said user reached during said step of selecting and iteratively presenting messages;

generating statistics for each selected message set, said statistics indicating for each of a plurality of levels in the information tree corresponding to the selected message set the likelihood that users in a given demographic group are presented with a message in that level; and

updating said selection criteria based on the generated statistics.

13.   A system for interactive distribution and presentation of information and for measuring information exposure, comprising:

at least one computer connected to a computer network, said at least one computer including storage means in which information is stored in the form of a plurality of message sets, each of said plurality of messages sets being organized as a multi-level information tree structure, some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for sequential presentation and some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for alternative presentation, each message set being assigned selection criteria;

means for selecting, based on the selection criteria, one of the stored message sets for presentation to a user connected to the network;

means for presenting a message of a first level in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with a plurality of response choices, receiving a selected response from the user, and selectively and iteratively presenting messages of subsequent levels in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with subsequent response choices based on user response to previously presented response choices;

means for monitoring a level of said multi-level tree structure that said user has reached during selective and iterative presentation of messages; and

means for generating statistics for each selected message set, said statistics indicating for each of a plurality of levels in the corresponding information tree the likelihood that users in a given demographic group are presented with a message in that level.

14.   The system according to claim 13, wherein

said at least one computer comprises means for receiving a user ID from a user connected to the network and means for storing a user database containing user profiles, and

said means for selecting one of the message sets includes means for making this selection based on a comparison of selection criteria associated

with the stored message sets and a user profile in said user profile database referred to by the received user ID.

15.   The system according to claim 13, wherein

said at least one computer further includes means for assigning priorities to message sets stored on the storage means, and

said means for selecting one of the message sets includes means for making this selection based on a comparison of said priorities.

16.   The system according to claim 15, wherein said means for generating statistics includes means for registering how many times a particular message set or particular part of a message set is presented and means for generating and presenting statistics in real time, based on such registration.

17.   The system according to claim 13, wherein

said at least one computer comprises means for converting data representing text to data representing sounds of speech, and

said means for presenting is arranged to transmit any text part of a message that is part of the selected message set to said text to speech converter, said text to speech converter being arranged to forward the converted data representing sounds of speech.

18.   A system for interactive distribution and presentation of information and for generating revenue for such interactive distribution and presentation, comprising:

at least one computer connected to a computer network, said at least one computer including storage means in which information is stored in the form of a plurality of message sets, each of said plurality of messages sets being organized as a multi-level information tree structure, some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for sequential presentation and some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for alternative presentation, the determination of which messages are included in which levels of said information tree being based on a fee arrangement that charges higher fees for messages in lower levels of said multi-level information tree relative to messages in higher levels of said multi-level information tree, each message set being assigned selection criteria;

means for selecting, based on the selection criteria, one of the stored message sets for presentation to a user connected to the network;

means for presenting a message of a first level in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with a plurality of response choices, receiving a selected response from the user, and selectively and iteratively presenting messages of subsequent levels in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with subsequent response choices based on user response to previously presented response choices;

means for monitoring a level of said multi-level tree structure that said user has reached during selective and iterative presentation of messages; and

means for generating statistics for each selected message set, said statistics indicating for each of a plurality of levels in the corresponding information tree the likelihood that users in a given demographic group are presented with a message in that level.

19.   A system for interactive distribution and presentation of information and for generating revenue for such interactive distribution and presentation of information, comprising:

at least one computer connected to a computer network, said at least one computer including storage means in which information is stored in the form of a plurality of message sets, each of said plurality of messages sets being organized as a multi-level information tree structure, some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for sequential presentation and some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for alternative presentation, each message set being assigned selection criteria;

means for selecting, based on the selection criteria, one of the stored message sets for presentation to a user connected to the network, the likelihood of selection for a given message set being a function of a priority fee arrangement for presenting said message set;

means for presenting a message of a first level in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with a plurality of response choices, receiving a selected response from the

user, and selectively and iteratively presenting messages of subsequent levels in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with subsequent response choices based on user response to previously presented response choices;

means for monitoring a level of said multi-level tree structure that said user has reached during selective and iterative presentation of messages; and

means for generating statistics for each selected message set, said statistics indicating for each of a plurality of levels in the corresponding information tree the likelihood that users in a given demographic group are presented with a message in that level.

20.   A system for targeting interactive distribution and presentation of information, comprising:

at least one computer connected to a computer network, said at least one computer including storage means in which information is stored in the form of a plurality of message sets, each of said plurality of messages sets being organized as a multi-level information tree structure, some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for sequential presentation and some messages in said multi-level information tree being arranged for alternative presentation, each message set being assigned selection criteria;

means for selecting, based on the selection criteria, one of the stored message sets for presentation to a user connected to the network;

means for presenting a message of a first level in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with a plurality of response choices, receiving a selected response from the user, and selectively and iteratively presenting messages of subsequent levels in the multi-level information tree corresponding to the selected message set to said user along with subsequent response choices based on user response to previously presented response choices;

means for monitoring a level of said multi-level tree structure that said user has reached during selective and iterative presentation of messages;

means for generating statistics for each selected message set, said statistics indicating for each of a plurality of levels in the corresponding information tree the likelihood that users in a given demographic group are presented with a message in that level;

means for updating said selection criteria based on said generated statistics.